

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

1 1. (Currently amended) A nonwoven fabric comprising at least two separate
2 but interconnected layers, said fabric comprising hydroentangled and consolidated fibers in each
3 of the layers as well as discrete interconnections so as to provide discrete voids between the two
4 layers of fabric, said fabric having a permeability sufficient to enable storage of fluids within the
5 voids.

1 2. (Previously presented) The nonwoven fabric according to claim 1
2 characterized in that the voids comprise a channel within the structure of the fabric.

1 3. (Previously presented) The nonwoven fabric according to claim 1
2 characterized in that the voids comprise a plurality of channels.

1 4. (Previously presented) The nonwoven fabric according to claim 2
2 characterized in that the channels have a substantially cylindrical or tubular shape.

1 5. (Previously presented) The nonwoven fabric according to claim 1
2 characterized in that the voids are arranged in a substantially uniform or periodic manner.

1 6. (Previously presented) The nonwoven fabric according to claim 1
2 characterized in that the thickness of the nonwoven fabric is from 1 mm to 9 mm.

1 7. (Previously presented) The nonwoven fabric according to claim 1
2 characterized in that the area density of the nonwoven fabric is from 40 to 300 g/m².

1 8. (Previously presented) The nonwoven fabric according to claim 1,
2 wherein the voids comprise discrete channels within the body of the fabric.

1 9. (Canceled)

1 10. (Previously presented) The nonwoven fabric according to claim 2
2 characterized in that the width of the channels are in the range from 0.2 mm to 8.5 mm.

1 11. (Previously presented) The nonwoven fabric according to claim 1,
2 wherein said voids further comprise one or more functional materials.

1 **12.** (Previously presented) The nonwoven fabric according to claim **11**
2 characterized in that the functional material is a member selected from a yarn, filament, wire,
3 wax, gel, liquid, pulp and particle.

1 **13.** (Previously presented) The nonwoven fabric according to claim **1**,
2 wherein the separate but interconnected layers are formed from a member selected from carded,
3 air-laid, wet-laid, spun-laid and meltblown webs and combinations thereof.

1 **14.** (Previously presented) The nonwoven fabric according to claim **1**,
2 wherein the layers are fibrous, and wherein at least two fibrous layers are made of different fiber
3 types.

1 **15.** (Previously presented) The nonwoven fabric according to claim **14**,
2 wherein at least one fibrous layer is hydrophobic and at least one fibrous layer is hydrophilic.

1 **16.** (Previously presented) The nonwoven fabric according to claim **12**,
2 wherein the functional material is a member selected from a yarn and a filament and said yarns
3 and filaments are made of a member selected from natural, man-made and mineral fibres.

1 **17.** (Previously presented) The nonwoven fabric according to claim **12**,
2 wherein the functional material is a liquid and said liquid is a member selected from cleaning
3 liquids, detergent liquids, paints, perfumes, cosmetics, lotions, ointments, antioxidants, liquid
4 nutrients and creams.

1 **18.** (Previously presented) The nonwoven fabric according to claim **12**,
2 wherein the functional material is a powder and said powder is a member selected from
3 superabsorbents, cleaning agents and medicaments.

1 **19.** (Previously presented) The nonwoven fabric according to claim **12**,
2 wherein the functional material is a particle and said particle is a member selected from a silica
3 gel, activated carbon particles, metallic particles, ceramic particles, polymer particles, phase
4 change material (PCM) particles and seed particles.

1 **20.** (Previously presented) The nonwoven fabric according to claim **12**,
2 wherein the functional material is a wire and said wire is a member selected from electrically
3 conductive wires, shape memory alloy (SMA) wire and optical wires.

1 **21.** (Previously presented) The nonwoven fabric according to claim **12**,
2 wherein the functional material is a gel and said gel is a member selected from hydrogels,
3 medicinal gels and hygienic cleaning gels.

1 **22-32.** (Canceled)

1 **33.** (Previously presented) The nonwoven fabric according to claim **1**
2 characterized in that the nonwoven fabric is suitable for the controlled release of one or more
3 medicaments.

1 **34.** (Previously presented) The nonwoven fabric according to claim **1**
2 characterized in that the nonwoven fabric is suitable for containing or delivering one or more
3 cleaning fluids.

1 **35.** (Previously presented) The nonwoven fabric according to claim **1**
2 characterized in that the nonwoven fabric is in the form of an absorbent article.

1 **36.** (Previously presented) The nonwoven fabric according to claim **35**,
2 wherein the absorbent article is a member selected from a wipe, a wound dressing, a baby diaper
3 component, an incontinence pad, and a feminine hygiene absorbent pad.

1 **37-40.** (Canceled)

1 **41.** (Previously presented) The nonwoven fabric according to claim **1**, wherein
2 the nonwoven fabric is suitable for light-weight thermal insulation.

1 **42.** (Previously presented) The use of the nonwoven fabric according to claim
2 **1** in the manufacture of an article.

1 **43.** (Previously presented) The use according to claim **42** wherein the article is
2 a member selected from a medicament delivery device, a cleaning fluids delivery device, an

3 absorbent article, a wipe, a wound dressing, a baby diaper component, an incontinence pad, a
4 feminine hygiene absorbent pad and a thermal insulation material.

1 **44.** (Previously presented) A method of delivering a functional material
2 which comprises the use of the nonwoven fabric according to claim 1.

1 **45.** (Previously presented) The nonwoven fabric according to claim 1 wherein
2 the voids are coated with a vapour permeable PU polymer.

1 **46.** (New) The nonwoven fabric according to claim 1, wherein each of said
2 voids is defined by the layers and said interconnections.

1 **47.** (New) The nonwoven fabric according to claim 46, wherein said layers
2 are configured to enable delivery of said fluid.

1 **48.** (New) The nonwoven fabric according to claim 1, wherein said fabric has
2 differential permeability.